



Defining Moments

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“The reputation of a thousand years is determined by the conduct of one hour.”



OBJECTIVES

- Apply ethical standards in our daily lives.
- Identify what is at stake between ethical decisions involving right versus right

ETHICAL STANDARDS

- Policy
- Personal Ethics
- Situational Ethics

Which of these lead to the best results when making the best ethical choice?

ETHICAL STANDARDS SET BY POLICY

- Mission and value statements
- Codes of conduct

List one benefit and one limitation of each in setting ethical standards.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES – ACJA § 1-303

- Canon 1 – Independence, Integrity and Impartiality of Judiciary
- Canon 2 – Competence and Diligence
- Canon 3 – Outside Activities
- Canon 4 – Political Activity

ETHICAL STANDARDS

- **Policy**
- **Personal Ethics**
- **Situational Ethics**

CRITERIA OF GOOD ETHICAL INSTINCT

- It is not a single compelling impulse
- It does not substitute for logic, common sense or consideration of basic ethical principles
- It arises after serious attention to relevant facts
- It does not cross the boundary between right and wrong
- It can be explained in terms others will understand

DEFINING MOMENTS

- Revealing
- Testing
- Shaping



DEFINING MOMENTS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

“In law a man is guilty when he violates the rights of others. In ethics he is guilty if he only thinks of doing so.”

- Actions send signals
- Omissions send signals



POLICY FIRST, BUT WHEN YOU NEED TO MAKE DECISIONS NOT COVERED IN POLICY, CONSIDER:

How do my feelings and instincts define the dilemma?

Which of the responsibilities and values in conflict have the strongest roots in me and in my organization?

Looking to the future what is my way?

How can this decision move us towards our goals?

AND, USE A LITTLE L.O.G.I.C.

Laws or Regulations

Organization's Code of Conduct

Get another person's perspective

Investigate your options

Check your comfort level

DEFINING MOMENTS

*“Ordinary people, even weak people, can do extraordinary things through temporary courage generated by a situation. But the person of character does not need the situation to generate his courage. It is a part of his being and a standard approach to all life's challenges. **We're all ethical in our own eyes. Although we are usually judged by our last worst act, we usually judge ourselves by our most noble deeds, our best intentions and our most virtuous traits.** Character is not a fancy coat we put on for show, it's who we really are.”*

Michael Josephson, American Ethics Consultant 1942